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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: WANG YOU-THENG CASE, TAIWAN'S NAME CHANGE
PLAN

11. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused its coverage February 6 on an unexpected personnel reshuffle in the Presidential Office Monday evening, and on Wang You-theng, founder of the debt-ridden Rebar Group, who is now in custody in California after having been refused admission to Singapore and returned to Los Angeles Sunday. The pro-unification "United Daily News" ran a banner headline on page four that said "Stratagems Used to Arrest Wang; Taiwan Prosecutors Have Quietly Departed for U.S." In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "United Daily News" editorial discussed Taiwan's efforts to arrest Wang You-theng and said there is no way Taiwan can use politis to try to influence the judiciaries of Singapore and the United States. An editorial in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News," on the other hand, welcomed the DPP government's recent move to rectify the names of two state-run enterprises, and said the move was in Taiwan's interest. End summary.

12. Wang You-theng Case

"United States and Singapore Both Demonstrate: No Way Politics Can Influence Judiciary"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (2/6):

"... Sources said [Taiwan] government authorities have been pushing the [Wang You-theng] case from the angle of diplomatic mediation, and this is why the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stepped up and apologized to the public immediately following its failure to arrest [Wang at the Singapore airport]. Taiwan hoped that the 'Taiwan-U.S. Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement' could help, but the agreement does not require the United States to extradite Taiwan criminals back to the island. Some people thus believe that Taiwan failed to get adequate assistance from Singapore and the United States because it has not tried 'hard enough' in its negotiations with the two countries. ..."

"... In fact, all our efforts will have been in vain if we continue to indulge in the idea of being an underdog in terms of foreign relations, or if we continue to act according to our own political thinking. This is because both Singapore and the United States are countries ruled by law. Taiwan will only be asking for a snub if it tries to use politics to influence the judiciaries of the two countries. This should be viewed as the biggest lesson that we have learned. ..."

13. Taiwan's Name Change Plan

"Rectification in Taiwan's Interest"

The pro-independence "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (2/6):

"We strongly support the Democratic Progressive Party government's decisions to rectify the names of two state enterprises and to finally remove the statues of former autocrat Chiang Kai-shek from Taiwan's military installations. In our view, these decisions are long overdue and absolutely necessary. Although these two moves are taking place at the same time, their substantial natures are distinct. The acceleration of the rectification of the names of Taiwan official agencies or state enterprises is a reflection of the recognition by the Democratic Progressive Party government of the actual, existing reality that the sovereignty of Taiwan or, if you please, the ROC does not extend to the People's Republic of China, but is limited to the 23 million people on the territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu. ... We urge the DPP to remain resolute and accelerate the process of 'rectification,' which is undoubtedly in the public interest of all Taiwan citizens."

YOUNG